

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 COME-00 STR-08 CIEP-02

OMB-01 EPA-04 SCI-06 CEQ-02 SCEM-02 DRC-01 TRSE-00

COA-02 DLOS-06 SIL-01 LAB-06 /188 W

----- 126656

R 311756Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5214

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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PASS LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ECON, UK

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT OUTLINES PROGRAM AS NEW
PARLIAMENTARY SESSION BEGINS

SUMMARY: A NEW SESSION OF PARLIAMENT BEGAN ON OCTOBER
30 INAUGURATED BY THE CUSTOMARY STATEMENT OF THE
GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR THE COMING LEGISLATIVE YEAR
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INCORPORATED IN THE QUEEN'S GRACIOUS SPEECH FROM THE

THRONE. THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM REFLECT AN UNCHANGED STRATEGY TOWARDS THE PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND THE CONTROL OF PRICES AND INCOMES. INCLUDED ARE PROPOSALS TO ADVANCE THE SUBMISSION TO PARLIAMENT OF THE TAX CREDIT SCHEME, TO IMPROVE CONSUMER CREDIT PROTECTION, TO REFORM COMPANY LAW, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION AND OTHERS DEALING WITH SUCH SUBJECTS AS HOUSING, SEX DISCRIMINATION, LAND HOARDING, ETC. APART FROM SIGNALING THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM INTENTION TO CONTINUE ITS BASIC ECONOMIC STRATEGY, THE PROGRAM SEEMS DESIGNED WITH A VIEW TO ITS ELECTORAL APPEAL IN A YEAR WHICH COULD WELL SEE A BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION. THE REMAINDER OF THIS PARLIAMENTARY WEEK WILL BE TAKEN UP WITH GENERAL DEBATES ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, THE FIRST OF WHICH WILL DEAL WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

END SUMMARY.

1. THE QUEEN'S SPEECH (BEING POUCHED) CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING:

(A) EC - A PLEDGE THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD PLAY ITS FULL PART IN FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EC, INCLUDING PROGRESS TOWARDS ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION, ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND AND COOPERATION IN FOREIGN POLICY.

(B) FOREIGN POLICY - DESIRE WAS EXPRESSED FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST, AS ACTIVE GOVERNMENT ROLE AND SUPPORT FOR NATO, CSCE, MBFR, UN, ARMS CONTROL MEASURES (INCLUDING LEGISLATION TO ENABLE UK TO RATIFY UN CONVENTION ON PROHIBITION OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS) AND AN INTERIM FISHERIES AGREEMENT WITH ICELAND. ALSO INCLUDED WAS BRIEF STATEMENT ON UK RELATIONS WITH US AND OTHER MAJOR POWERS (SEPTIL).

(C) NORTHERN IRELAND - LEGISLATION TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE OF RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL BELIEFS.

(D) DOMESTIC ECONOMY - AIM WOULD BE TO IMPROVE STANDARD OF LIVING AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO REQUIREMENTS OF OLD, SICK AND NEEDY. A PRIMARY CONCERN WOULD BE TO SUSTAIN MAXIMUM GROWTH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF ECONOMY WHILE ACHIEVING NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS IN

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RUFHBSWXUSMISSITN EC BRUSSELS 0654

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BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND PURSUING COUNTER INFLATIONARY
POLICIES. GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES WOULD BE CONTAINED.

(E) OTHER SPECIFIC PROGRAMS - TO ADVANCE LEGIS-
LATION FOR THE TAX-CREDIT SCHEME ORIGINALLY PROPOSED
OCTOBER 1972, TO IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS, TO PROVIDE
GREATER CONTROL OF ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION, TO REFORM
COMPANY LAW, PLANS TO INVESTIGATE PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYEE
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PARTICIPATITN IN INDUSTRY, LELISLATION TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND HEALTH CONDITIONS OF WORKERS, TO REFORM AND EXTEND CONSUMER CREDIT LAW, TO REMOVE U FAIR SEX DISCRIMINATION, TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES BY AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, TO PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY, TO FINANCE THE CHANNEL TUNNEL, TO INTRODUCE REFORM IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, TO STRENGTHEN LAWS AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY, TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS OF LAW AND ORDER.

2. COMMENT: IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR THE QUEEN'S GRACIOUS SPEECH TO INCLUDE SUCH A FULL PANOPLY OF PROGRAMS. NEVERTHELESS, THE NEXT BRITISH GENERAL ELECTIONS ARE AT THE MOST ONLY EIGHTEEN MONTHS OFF, AND THE LONG LIST OF GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS CLEARLY HAS A PRE-ELECTION FLAVOR. IT WILL OFFEND FEW AND SEEMS DESIGNED TO OFFER SOMETHING APPEALING TO ALMOST EVERY ELEMENT OF THE POPULATION. THIS IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND CERTAINLY IT IS POLITICALLY PRUDENT. THE GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS VERY WELL, OF COURSE, THAT ITS PERFORMANCE IN THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION WILL NOT REST SOLELY ON THIS PROGRAM, BUT RATHER ON THE SUCCESS, OR FAILURE, OF ITS ECONOMIC POLICIES. IT IS ALST KEENLY AWARE THAT THESE POLICIES CAN BE AFFECTED BY MANY FACTORS NOT WITHIN ITS CONTROL.

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